



Constitution

Sisters of Saint Joseph

of Springfield



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BISHOP'S RESIDENCE

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December 17, 1986

Sister Kathleen Keating, S.S.J., President
Sisters of Saint Joseph
Mont Marie
Holyoke, Massachusetts 01040

Dear Sister Kathleen:

I send congratulations to you and the Sisters of Saint Joseph on the completion of your new Constitution. In accordance with Canon 595, paragraph 1 of the New Code of Canon Law, I am pleased to grant approval for this Constitution which has been accepted by the Congregation's General Chapter. The document has been written in conformity with Church Law and should be interpreted in like manner.

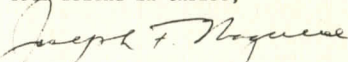
During the past several months, Bishop Leo E. O'Neil and I have met with religious women to discuss concerns relating to their vocation and service. This has been a learning experience for us, as well as an opportunity for growth in our understanding of the challenges and tensions facing religious today. Through listening, sharing and improved communication, we have gained new perceptions and we are pledged to walk side by side with religious in the journey that leads to the Kingdom.

Please assure the Sisters of Saint Joseph of my affection, respect and gratitude. For a century and more, they have been engaged in the apostolate of Catholic education, instructing elementary, high school and college students. Women of faith, they have given unselfishly of their talent and effort that young people might be trained in an environment combining learning and gospel values. It would be impossible to estimate the transforming influence of the Sisters of Saint Joseph on our people, our parishes, this diocese and the nation at large.

As women intimately linked to the Lord's Redemption, your Sisters are signs among us of the presence of Jesus who came "to serve, not to be served." That the Church may be blessed with more young women who will embrace hopefully and confidently the apostolic mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph - this is my hopeful and heartfelt prayer.

Wishing you the Lord's peace and with thanks for your diligence and devotion, I am

Your friend in Christ,



Most Reverend Joseph F. Maguire
Bishop of Springfield



SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH

January 1987

Dear Sisters,

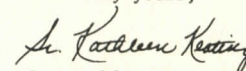
It is with pride that I present the Constitution of our congregation to you. This Rule of Life, having been approved unanimously by our General Chapter of 1986, belongs to each sister of the community.

This Constitution is the result of ten years of work. It went through several drafts, each one critiqued by the congregation. On behalf of the whole community I wish to thank the members of the committee who worked so perseveringly to present a document which was faithful to our spirit. Additionally, all those sisters who took the time to reflect on the preliminary drafts and to offer suggestions to the committee contributed in bringing this work to fruition. As a consequence of this community participation each of us can claim this Constitution as the embodiment of how we strive to live out our lives.

I believe that this Constitution is a spiritual work, not merely to be read, but to become an integral part of our prayers and reflections. It beckons us to live out the mission of Jesus Christ with special attention to the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. It calls us to fidelity to our tradition and to openness to the possibilities of the future. It recognizes us as ecclesial women, attentive to the development of community and the needs of God's people.

My prayer is that the Constitution will be for each of us a source of inspiration for our life as Sisters of Saint Joseph and a reminder of God's invitation to give radical witness to the Gospel.

Sincerely yours,


Sr. Kathleen Keating
President

MONT MARIE

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Sisters of Saint Joseph

CONSENSUS STATEMENT OF
THE CENTRAL IDEAS OF
JOHN P. MEDAILLE, S.J.

Stimulated by the Holy Spirit of love
and receptive to His inspirations,
the Sister of St. Joseph moves always toward
profound love of God
and love of neighbor without distinction
from whom she does not separate herself,
and for whom, in the following of Christ,
she works in order to achieve unity
both of neighbor with neighbor
and neighbor with God
directly in this apostolate
and indirectly through works of charity
in humility, the spirit of the Incarnate Word,
in sincere charity, the manner of St. Joseph
whose name she bears,
in an Ignatian-Salesian climate, that is,
with an orientation toward excellence
tempered by gentleness, peace, joy.

(as found in the primitive Constitution)

Nature and Purpose

We, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, Massachusetts,
are religious women
in an apostolic Congregation of diocesan right.

The Springfield foundation,
established in 1883,
has its roots in Le Puy, France,
where Jean Pierre Medaille, S.J. and the first sisters
founded the first Congregation of Sisters of St. Joseph
in 1650.

Our community was founded
to be a Congregation of the “great love of God”
in which we come to recognize Christ and neighbor
in the breaking of the bread.

As members of the Church,
we respond freely and joyously
to the call of the Holy Spirit
to love God and neighbor.

In order to free ourselves
to live this life of love,
we profess and practice the evangelical counsels
of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

Our life and works are directed to a single purpose:
the union of ourselves and all people
with God and with one another
in and through Christ Jesus.

In the following of Christ
we dedicate ourselves
to the service of the neighbor,
with preference for the poor.



Spirit and Spirituality

Our spirit and spirituality
are based on the charism
of Jean Pierre Medaille, S.J.
and the first Sisters of St. Joseph.

They call us to develop a deep relationship
with the persons of the Trinity.

In union with God Who is the origin of all that is,
we seek in all things
what is most loving.

In union with the Word of God,
we empty ourselves
for the sake of the other.

In union with the Spirit,
we realize and express
God's love in our lives.

Our spirit and spirituality
further call us
to deepen our relationship
with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

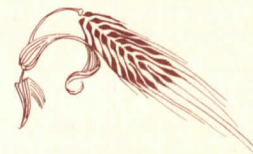
We assume the attitude of Jesus
in His total concern
for the glory of God and the salvation of the world,
of Mary
in her openness
and her fidelity to the inspiration of grace,
and of Joseph
in his attentiveness to others
and his constant willingness to serve.

We are called to union with Jesus Christ
through sharing the Eucharist,
in which we are drawn ever more fully
into the mystery of His death and resurrection,
so that we may die to self
and live in God and for others.

Father Medaille urges us never to rest in the past,
but always to move toward closer union with God
and greater fidelity to the spirit and spirituality
of our Congregation.

Mission and Ministry

Our mission as Sisters of St. Joseph
is to live and work
that all people may be united
with God and with one another.



It is rooted in the mission of Jesus,
the same mission which continually unfolds in the Church:

That all may be one,
as You, Father, are in me, and I in You:
I pray that they may be one in us.

(John 17:21)

Aware that Jesus enters this world
to give witness to the truth,
to serve,
and to give His life for the redemption of all people,
we seek
to advance the mission of Jesus
under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To further this end,
each sister ministers according to her own charism,
and we encourage one another
to use our gifts generously
in carrying out the works of mercy.

In prayer and action,
we are all involved in living simply
and working for a more just and peaceful world.

Our ministries flow from our mission
“that all may be one.”

As we discern our call to ministry
and as we minister to others,
we are mindful of the goal of our Congregation,
our own strengths and weaknesses,
and the needs of God's people,
especially the poor.

Consecration

Our life as religious
is rooted in our baptismal consecration
and is given expression by public profession
of the evangelical counsels.

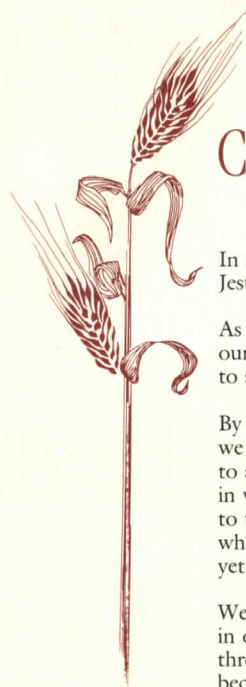
By faithful living of our vowed commitment,
we seek to respond to our call
to be like Jesus
and to move toward greater unity
with God and our dear neighbor.

By our vowed life,
we follow the chaste, poor, and obedient Jesus,
serving Him
with humility and love
in the person of our dear neighbor.

We make profession
of the evangelical counsels,
chastity, poverty, and obedience,
as a visible sign of hope in the Church and in the world.

Our vows are a personal and a public sign
of our commitment to love of God and neighbor.

Fidelity to our vows frees us
to identify more fully with Jesus
whose life and mission are one.



Chastity

In a life of chastity
Jesus becomes the center of our lives.

As we respond faithfully to His love,
our hearts are liberated
to share this love with the whole world.

By our vow of chastity,
we commit ourselves
to a chaste and celibate life
in which we witness
to the mystery of the reign of God
which we experience
yet await in its fulness.

We support one another
in our celibate lifestyle
through prayer and friendship
because only as loving women
can we both give and receive
God's gift of love.

Poverty

By a life of poverty
we acknowledge our complete dependence on God.

We witness to Gospel poverty
by living simply,
by trusting in God's providence,
by relinquishing material goods
not essential to human dignity and ministry,
and by sharing our common resources with those in need.

Poverty frees us
to give generously to all,
not only of our material goods,
but also of the spiritual riches
that flow from a life of dependence on God.

We accept the responsibility
to work to support ourselves
and provide for the needs of the poor.

By the vow of poverty,
we renounce
the independent use and disposal of material goods,
while we retain the ownership
of property we have at entrance
and may subsequently acquire through inheritance.

Before she makes temporary profession
and whenever goods are acquired,
a sister gives over the administration of this patrimony
to a person of her choice,
noting on the appropriate document
how income is to be distributed.
Any renunciation of this patrimony
requires the approval of the President.

Before perpetual profession,
each sister makes a will that is valid in civil court.
She may change her will with the approval of the President.

What each sister acquires
by way of labor, pension, and insurance
belongs to the Congregation.

Every sister who leaves the Congregation
waives the right to claim any remuneration or income
for services rendered to or for the Congregation.



Obedience

By our commitment to obedience,
in imitation of Jesus,
we open ourselves
to the movement of the Holy Spirit
who leads us to do God's will in all things.

Our life of obedience
calls us to listen attentively to God
in prayer,
in the circumstances of our own lives,
and in the lives of our neighbor,
as we give ourselves
in joyous service.

Our vow of obedience
commits us to live
according to our Constitution
and to accept openly and respectfully
the decisions made by the General Chapter
and other legitimate authority in the Congregation
when they act in accord with the Constitution.

Through obedience
we are reminded
of our shared responsibility
for the mission and ministry
of our Congregation.

We recognize the spirit of God
working in one another
as we respond to the needs of the people of God.

In seeking to know the will of God,
we engage in personal and communal prayerful discernment.

We dialogue with members of the Council
to arrive at informed decisions
which we accept in a spirit of faith.



Community

Our life together
is a sign of unity,
giving us strength and vitality
for our ministry
in the Church and the human community.

In mutual trust and respect,
we recognize our diversity of gifts
and encourage one another in our mission.

We bear one another's burdens,
acknowledge our need for forgiveness and reconciliation,
are present to one another in suffering,
and are enriched by the joys we share.

United in prayer and the sharing of faith,
we grow in love for one another
and in our willingness
to be responsible and accountable
for our life and mission.

We have a common symbol,
a cross which signifies
our dedication
to the Eucharist,
the Paschal mystery,
and St. Joseph.

In our community life and apostolic service,
we have a single goal:

In living a life
of dependence on the Creator and Sustainer,
in imitation of Gospel values of the Redeemer,
and in response to the movement of the Spirit,
the Sister of St. Joseph
gives witness
to her love of God and neighbor
by living simply
and by working for a more just society.



Mindful of her own talents and call,
each sister considers
her apostolic service and local community
in the light of the goal and needs
of our Congregation.

After prayerful discernment
and consultation with a member of the Council,
she reaches her decision
as to where she will live and work.

In our local communities,
we are united
in our need for one another.

We come together
to pray and to reach out
in response to the needs of our neighbor.

We determine our common life
by communal decisions.

Periodically we come together
as a Congregation
to educate ourselves,
to work together,
and to celebrate.

We invite and encourage all sisters
to participate in assemblies and celebrations
of the entire Congregation.

Prayer

Prayer is at the heart of our apostolic service.

Our prayer,
together and as individuals,
is above all a constant, loving, and peaceful attention
to the presence of God.

Through contemplation,
communal prayer,
participation in the liturgical life of the Church,
and faithful and prayerful study of the Sacred Scriptures,
we come to know and love Jesus
and are strengthened
that we may share His holiness, justice, and truth
with the world.

The Eucharist,
the source and center of our mission,
symbolizes and sustains our unity in Jesus,
strengthens us,
and reminds us of our responsibility
to live simply and justly
in order to nourish our neighbor.

In prayer,
we seek
to find and serve God in all things
by being present to God,
to ourselves,
and to the world
in a contemplative manner.

Conscious of our need
to enrich our prayer
and explore its apostolic significance,
we try to grow in awareness
of current social conditions
and the needs of the people of God.

Through our personal prayer,
we reflect upon our own lives
in light of the Gospel
and grow in deep personal involvement
with contemporary human realities.



We have the responsibility
to strive
to deepen our relationship with God
in individual prayer each day.

Periodically we enter
into more prolonged periods of personal renewal,
and annually each sister makes a retreat.

In our local communities
we determine the time and form
of our communal prayer.

As far as possible,
we gather for daily prayer
to support one another
and those with whom we minister.

We value the Liturgy of the Hours
and its many variations.

Sharing Eucharist,
we experience union with God,
one another,
and the whole Church.

We find in the Body of Christ
strength for our mission
and a visible sign
of that mission of union.

We plan times
for coming together as a local community
to celebrate Eucharist,
and as an apostolic community
we participate in this celebration with others.

In striving toward conversion of heart,
we are strengthened in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
by God's healing love.

Reconciliation enables us
to approach ourselves and others
with gentleness, honesty, simplicity, and openness.
Through this gesture and sign,
we accept our limitations and those of others.

In times of illness
we find solace and strength
in the Sacrament of the Sick.



We pray for our benefactors
and for all members of our Congregation,
living and dead.

Mindful of our mystical union
with our deceased sisters
through the communion of saints,
our Congregation has Mass offered for them monthly
in the spirit of loving, grateful remembrance.

Upon the death of a sister,
we pray
in gratitude for her life
and for her eternal peace.

Mary is the model
of our consecrated womanhood.
Our devotion to her
leads us
to imitate her receptivity and generosity
that we too may live
in constant response to the Spirit
to bring Christ to the world.

As Sisters of St. Joseph,
we develop a personal devotion
to our patron, St. Joseph,
who guides and strengthens us
in our hidden and active service
to the world.

Our name, Sisters of St. Joseph,
reminds us
to serve our neighbor
with the same heartfelt love
with which Joseph served Mary and Jesus.

Membership

As Sisters of St. Joseph,
we are women of the Church,
women who love God
and attend to the needs of the world.

Called by God to a vowed life,
we are striving
for the union of neighbor with neighbor
and neighbor with God.

Those who seek membership with us
should evidence love of God and neighbor,
an attraction to a life of prayer and service,
and a desire
to make the spirit of our Congregation their own.

They must possess
the necessary qualifications and maturity
which will enable them
to enter into our life and mission.

As Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield,
we have the right and responsibility
to share the duties and privileges
of communal living.

We engage in the mission
and participate in the affairs
of our Congregation.

We live according to our Constitution
which call us
to a constant growth
and lively interest
in the spirit of the Congregation,
to fidelity to our charism,
and to an unselfish zeal for our mission.

Formation

We recognize
that our formation as Sisters of St. Joseph
is a lifelong process
through which

“if we live by the truth and in love,
we shall grow in all ways into Christ.”
(Ephesians 4:15)

In order to participate more fully in the vowed life,
each sister assumes the responsibility
for her own ongoing formation.

At the same time,
she looks to the Congregation
for recognition and support.

The Congregation, in turn,
encourages each sister
and provides her with opportunities
that help her to grow
in her communal and professional life
so that she may offer
creative and relevant apostolic service.



Initial Formation

FORMATION PERSONNEL

Initial formation is the active concern
of every sister,
and especially of the President,
because of its importance to the Congregation.

The Director of Novices is a perpetually professed sister,
appointed by the President
with the consent of the Council
to a term not to exceed six years.

The sisters appointed
to the work of initial formation
guide the affiliates, novices,
and those in temporary profession
toward the fulness of their vocation.

The formation personnel seek to understand
the way the Holy Spirit is directing
the affiliates, novices, and those in temporary profession
in order to help them
to respond faithfully to God's gift,
and to grow in the holiness
God desires of them.

ADMISSION TO THE CONGREGATION

Affiliates, novices, and those in temporary profession
are admitted to every stage of formation
by the President of the Congregation
with the consent of the Council,
after consultation
with the appropriate formation personnel
and prayer and discernment with the candidate.

AFFILIATION

A woman who seeks admission to our Congregation must be at least twenty-one years of age and must give evidence that she has received the Sacraments of Initiation and is free from canonical impediments.

Upon being admitted to the first stage of membership, she experiences a preliminary period of affiliation.

During this time, she lives in local community and familiarizes herself with our mission and ministry.



NOVITIATE

A woman who desires to be a Sister of St. Joseph becomes a member of our Congregation with her acceptance into the novitiate.

The novice has time to attend to her individual call and to the charism and life of our Congregation.

She experiences the value and demands of living the religious life and grows in the understanding and practice of the vows.

With guidance she deepens her prayer life and begins to internalize the spirit and spirituality of the Congregation.

In consultation with the President and Council, the Director of Novices designs with each novice the means of formation which will most effectively involve her in the life and mission of our Congregation.

The novice resides in a community designated her novitiate house by the President of the Congregation with the consent of the Council.

She engages in all aspects of congregational life except those prohibited by Canon Law.

She begins to live in financial interdependence with the Congregation.

The novitiate period lasts two years, during which time the novice focuses on finding a balance in her ministry, prayer, and community life.

During the canonical year, she intensifies her involvement in the life of the Church and Congregation by prayer, participation in liturgy, and study of Sacred Scripture and documents relevant to our mission and goal.

All the novice's activities are directed toward discernment regarding her spiritual and ministerial life as a member of the Congregation.

TEMPORARY PROFESSION

At the end of the novitiate, the novice who wishes to make temporary profession within our Congregation enters into discernment with her Director.

After she has been accepted to temporary profession, she professes temporary vows before the Congregation.

The period of temporary commitment is one of ongoing spiritual formation in preparation for commitment by perpetual vows.

The period lasts from three to six years,
but may be extended
so as not to exceed nine years.

During the time of temporary profession,
the sister regularly reflects on her spiritual growth
with a member of the Congregation
who is perpetually professed.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION

After completing at least three years
of temporary profession,
a sister may be admitted
to perpetual profession.

Under extraordinary circumstances,
perpetual profession may be anticipated
by not more than three months.

Since final profession is the unique and essential act
by which a sister is consecrated to God forever by vow,
it is preceded by a period of spiritual preparation.

The sister gives witness
to her commitment and consecration
by professing her perpetual vows
in a Eucharistic celebration.

Her vows are received
by the President or her delegate
in the name of the Church and the Congregation.



Authority is exercised in our Congregation
in imitation of Jesus
who came "not to be served,
but to serve." (Matthew 20:28)

Authority fosters our spirit and life
and frees us for service
in the Church and in the world.

Authority exists within our Congregation
as individual members invest themselves
and one another
with the responsibility
for coordination, administration, and prayerful discernment
of the scope and direction of our lives together.

Respecting the freedom of each person,
our governing bodies coordinate and further
the life and ministries of our Congregation
according to the principles
of collegiality and subsidiarity.

Individual and congregational decisions
are facilitated and implemented
by consultation and collaboration
with the Council
by Chapter proceedings,
and by participation in House Council.

Chapter

General Chapters are held to govern the Congregation and to maintain it in fidelity to its charism and mission.

The General Chapter, when in session, exercises the highest authority in the Congregation.

The General Chapter has two major responsibilities: to deal with important matters concerning the life of the Congregation and the directions it will take, and to elect the President, Vice-President, and Council.

Every six years the Chapter is convoked by the President of the Congregation three months before it convenes.

It is an event at which community reflects on the integrity of its shared understanding of Gospel in its common external activities.

The total Congregation participates by prayer, reflection, and general consideration of chapter material.

The Chapter consists of congregational delegates, and, ex-officio, the Councilors and former Presidents.

A two-thirds majority is required to elect the President and Council members. If this has not been reached on the third ballot, the top three names will be presented on the fourth. If the voting reaches a sixth ballot, the top two names will be presented. A two-thirds majority will be necessary for election of the President. A simple majority is necessary for election of the Council members.



When Council members have been so chosen, the Chapter elects the Vice-President from among them by a two-thirds majority.

Central Government

Our Central Administration
is composed of
the President,
Vice-President,
Council members,
and the Treasurer.



The qualifications
for members of the Council are
depth of spirituality
which will inspire and enable
individual and congregational growth;
deep insight and vision
regarding issues of the Church and society
and the relationship of religious life to them;
background sufficient to appreciate
varied ministries and living situations
which influence the lives of the sisters;
ability to interact and to collaborate with others;
respect for the dignity of the individual.

PRESIDENT

The President
is the spiritual and apostolic leader of our Congregation,
as well as its canonical and legal representative.

She has the authority and responsibility
to govern all the houses and members of the Congregation
according to our Constitution
and the decrees of the General Chapter.

She and the other Council members
exercise their leadership
by enabling members
to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The President must be perpetually professed
for at least one year
at the time of her election.

The term of office is six years.

The responsibilities of the President are
to represent the Congregation
at local, national, and international meetings;
to present to the Congregation periodically
a report on the state of the Congregation;
to oversee actions which require
the consent of the Council;
to make decisions which do not require
the consent of the Council.

With the consent of her Council,
the President has the power:
to establish, transfer, designate, or dissolve
a novitiate house of the Congregation;
to initiate the dismissal process
for a perpetually professed sister
according to Church law;
to dismiss a sister in temporary profession;
to allow a sister in temporary profession
to leave the Congregation,
and to so inform the local ordinary
where the sister resides;
to grant a sister exlastration up to three years;

- to approve the transfer of a member of the Congregation to another institute or to receive a sister from another institute;
- to authorize a sister to live outside a community of the Congregation in accord with Church law;
- to establish new regions of the Congregation or to suppress already existing ones;
- to confirm the establishment of a local community;
- to establish houses of the Congregation with the written consent of the ordinary of the place where the house is to be located, or to close a house after consultation with the local ordinary;
- to convoke ordinary and extraordinary Chapters;
- to initiate or terminate contracts in the name of the Congregation;
- to lease, sell, or mortgage property;
- to obtain authorization to assume debts or obligations that require the approval of the local ordinary;
- to authorize the congregational Treasurer to act on matters of extraordinary administration;
- to accept the resignation of, or to remove a sister from an elected or appointed office and to name a replacement.

In case of the death, resignation, or incapacity of the President, a special Chapter of Election will be called by the Vice-President. This special Chapter ordinarily will be held within three months of the vacancy, and the person elected will complete the unexpired term.

VICE-PRESIDENT

The Vice-President works closely with the President and assumes those responsibilities delegated to her.

She directs the Congregation in the absence of the President and governs the Congregation until the convening of a special Chapter of Election in the case of the death, resignation, or incapacity of the President.

Council Members

The general functions of the Council are

- to provide spiritual leadership;
- to lead the Congregation in its joyous service to all people;
- to foster unity within the Congregation;
- to accept new members of the Congregation and to decide on cases of dismissal;
- to provide for the convening of Chapters and for the implementation of decisions;
- to choose staff members and to create new staff positions, teams, and committees whenever necessary;
- to encourage the work of teams and to collaborate with them;
- to seek and to accept recommendations from the Congregation as a whole, from teams, staff members, and committees;
- to provide for the election of a member of the Council to complete a term in the event of a vacancy.

A term lasts six years.

A person who serves six years as President may serve as a Councilor provided there is an interim of six years; and a person who serves as a Councilor for six years may serve as President or Councilor after a six year interim.

After reflection and dialogue on congregational needs, the newly-elected Council members determine how best to respond to those needs, and what their individual responsibilities will be.

Councilors represent the authority of the Central Administration to local communities, and represent the local communities to the Council.



They make every effort
to provide leadership to local communities,
to broaden the vision of the Council,
and to bring to it the views
of the members of the Congregation.

Before attempting to render a decision,
the Council consults all appropriate subsidiary groups,
and explores every available avenue
for obtaining information.

Members make every effort
to strive for consensus.



CONGREGATIONAL TREASURER

The congregational Treasurer is appointed by the President
with the consent of the Council.

Her duties include
administering the property of the Congregation
under the direction of the President and Council;
making recommendations to the Council
regarding assets and holdings of the Congregation;
presenting annual financial reports to the Council
and to the Congregation.

The Treasurer is accountable to the President,
Council, and all members of the Congregation
for the administration of the duties of her office.

Local Government

Local government is based on shared decision-making,
responsibility, and accountability.

The House Council, the core of local government,
is comprised of all members of the local community.

The sisters residing in the house
decide the manner of conducting House Council.
They also establish policy
for emergency decision-making.

They meet regularly
to dialogue,
grapple with problems,
make decisions through consensus,
and thereby facilitate joyous service to others
in the local community,
the Congregation,
the Church,
and the world.

The House Council establishes
the community's own goals
in the light of the congregational goal
and evaluates them regularly.

Ordinarily local communities are linked
with the Central Administration
through their area Councilor.

Temporal Goods

The congregation may acquire, possess, relinquish goods and contract debts under the conditions defined by Church and civil law and this Constitution.

The Congregation is mindful of its witness to poverty in the acquisition and administration of temporal goods.

The goods of the Congregation are usually managed by the President and the Council.

Purchases, sales, debts, loans, and other extraordinary expenditures are authorized at all levels by the competent authority of the Congregation.

For relinquishing goods beyond the value established by the Holy See, the President seeks authorization from the Bishop of Springfield.



Separation

If, after prayer and discernment, it becomes evident that a sister ought to leave the Congregation, she is treated with love, respect, and justice.

Separation takes place by dispensation, exlaustration, dismissal, or transfer. The procedures outlined in Canon Law are followed in such cases, so that the rights and obligations of the individual sister as well as those of the Congregation will be safeguarded.

A woman who, after completing the novitiate or after profession, has left the Congregation legitimately, can be readmitted by the President with the consent of the Council.

A sister who wishes to transfer to our Congregation from another institute must determine with the Congregation if our charism and mission express in a more integral way her relationship with herself, Jesus, and the Church.

Our Congregation supports in the spirit of communal love a sister who is called to transfer from our Congregation to another institute.



Conclusion

This Constitution
expresses our vision, goals, and hopes,
as well as important aspects
of our lives together.

By our profession,
we freely commit ourselves
to live it,
so that united in Christ
we may give joyous service
to the whole church.

Sisters of St. Joseph, Mont Marie, Holyoke MA 01040